

## "Defending False Accusations," Part 1 - 2 Corinthians 10:1-6 – January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

- Today's teaching will be part one of a new series I've titled, "Defending False Accusations."
- From chapter ten through the rest of the book, the Apostle Paul takes on a very different tone, such that he seems very harsh.
- So much so that some have suggested chapters 10-13 are actually a separate letter than that of chapters one through nine.
- While I suppose it's possible that this is a separate letter, it certainly does not take away from the powerful punch that it packs.
- This because, Paul finds himself in the unenviable position of being forced to defend himself against patently false accusations.
- It appears that there were some who were accusing Paul of everything from hypocrisy to carnality and everything in between.
- As such, the Apostle Paul will rise from the pages of this chapter and show us how to defend ourselves when falsely accused.
- However, it's important to understand that often times, when we as Christians are falsely accused, nothing we say will matter.
- The reason being is that some people are by nature, hyper critical, even hard-core antagonists who you will never ever satisfy.

Kenneth C. Haugk in "Antagonists in the Church," writes, "Antagonists are individuals who on the basis of non-substantive evidence, go out of their way to make insatiable demands, usually attacking the person or performance of others. These attacks are selfish in nature, tearing down rather than building up, and are frequently directed against those in a leadership capacity."

- What follows are ways in which to properly and correctly deal with antagonists who mercilessly attack and falsely accuse you.

### **1. Be humble and bold (Verses 1-2)**

- v1 Paul appeals to them by Christ's humility and gentleness to defend himself against the accusation of being timid face to face.
- v2 He begs them saying he doesn't want to be bold toward some who accuse him of walking according to the ways of the world.
- It seems that the accusation and attack made against Paul here was that he was a hypocrite who was very different in person.
- If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most common accusations that's made against Christians, this has to be it.
- Namely, that of our walk not matching our talk. Sadly, this can be true in some measure for the majority of today's Christians.
- However, for the most part, we as Christians can be blameless though not sinless, in the sense that we are growing in grace.
- I find it interesting Paul would commence his defense by taking the posture of appealing by Christ's humility and gentleness.
- In other words, Paul is demonstrating a Christ like meekness and gentleness, yet at the same time remaining strong and bold.
- We do err greatly in seeing meekness as synonymous with weakness. Meekness is best understood as strength under control.

I like how one commentator said it, "...a powerful stallion is so well trained that it yields to the slightest nudge of the rider, the Greek concept of meekness was exhibited nowhere more perfectly than in Jesus. It is this controlled strength that Paul employs. He quotes his detractors, who said about him, "Sure, he can write a strong letter, but in person he's not all that impressive," as they resorted to the age-old tactic of criticizing one's opponent physically if unable to counter his argument logically.

### **2. Fight with spiritual weapons (Verses 3-6)**

- v3-4 Paul says though we live in the world we don't fight as the world, rather, we fight with divine power to demolish strongholds.
- v5 He then says that we demolish and take captive every thought against the knowledge of God making it obedient to Christ.
- v6 He then goes on to tell them that they will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once their obedience is complete.
- Here again we as Christians can be guilty of walking according to the ways of the world in the sense that we can be in the flesh.
- However, while walking according to the flesh can be a struggle for any Christian, we should never resort to fighting in the flesh.
- When Satan gets a Christian out of the arena of the Spirit and into the arena of the flesh they will be defeated every single time.

Alan Redpath said it best this way, "Apart from a mighty awakening and revival in the church, we are fighting a losing battle because we are resisting on carnal levels."

- I think of Peter who we're told in John 18:10 drew his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest named Malchus.
- The point being is we like Peter, are prone to fight a spiritual battle using carnal weapons, and in so doing make a bloody mess.
- The question becomes one of what are the spiritual weapons we are to fight with, and the answer is found in the Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6:10-18 - 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

- Here's the takeaway in closing, when attacked and falsely accused, respond with a holy boldness and a Christ like meekness.
- As you do, stand firm in the power of God's might, and put on the full armor of God in order to fight with your spiritual weapons.
- Finally, the way to put on the armor is by way of praying continually in the Spirit keeping in mind that need to always be alert.